

# AP World History

## The Cold War: A Soviet Perspective

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*The Cold War and indeed modern history were seen differently in the Soviet Union than in the West. The following excerpt is from History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (1960), an official publication of the Soviet government. Here the focus is on the end of World War II and the early Cold War period.*

*CONSIDER: The elements of this interpretation most likely to be accepted by Western non-Marxist historians; how this interpretation differs from Truman's and Marshall's perceptions; how these differences help explain the existence of the Cold War.*

As a result of the war the capitalist system sustained enormous losses and became weaker. The second stage of the general crisis of capitalism set in, manifesting itself chiefly in a new wave of revolutions. Albania, Bulgaria, Eastern Germany, Hungary, Czechoslovakia. Poland, Rumania and Yugoslavia broke away from the system of capitalism ...

In their relations with the People's Democracies the Communist Party and the Soviet Government strictly adhered to the principle of non-interference in their internal affairs. The USSR recognized the people's governments in these States and supported them politically. True to its internationalist duty, the USSR came to the aid of the People's Democracies with grain, seed and raw materials, although its own stocks had been badly depleted during the war. This helped to provide the population with foodstuffs and also to speed up the re-commissioning of many industrial enterprises. The presence of the Soviet armed forces in the People's Democracies prevented domestic counter-revolution from unleashing a civil war and averted intervention. The Soviet Union paralyzed the attempts of the foreign imperialists to interfere in the internal affairs of the democratic States ...

The USA decided to take advantage of the economic and political difficulties in the other leading capitalist countries and bring them under its sway. Under the pretext of economic aid the USA began to infiltrate into their economy and interfere in their internal affairs. Such big capitalist countries as Japan, West Germany, Italy, France and Britain all became dependent on the USA to a greater or lesser degree. The people of Western Europe were confronted with the task of defending their national sovereignty against the encroachments of American imperialism ...

The radical changes that took place after the second world war substantially altered the political map of the world. There emerged two main world social and

political camps: the Socialist and democratic camp, and the imperialist and anti-democratic camp ...

The ruling circles of the USA, striving for world supremacy, openly declared that they could achieve their aims only from "positions of strength." The American imperialists unleashed the so-called cold war, and sought to kindle the flames of a third world War. In 1949, the USA set up an aggressive military bloc known as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). As early as 1946, the Western States began to pursue a policy of splitting Germany, which was essentially completed in 1949 with the creation of a West German State. Subsequently they set out to militarize West Germany. This further deepened the division of Germany and made her reunification exceptionally difficult. A dangerous hotbed of war began to form in Europe. In the Far East the United States strove to create a hotbed of war in Japan, stationing its armed forces and building military bases on her territory.

In 1950, the United States resorted to open aggression in the Far East. It occupied the Chinese island of Taiwan, provoked an armed clash between the Korean People's Democratic Republic and South Korea and began an aggressive war against the Korean people. The war in Korea was a threat to the People's Republic of China, and Chinese people's volunteers came to the assistance of the Korean people.

The military adventure of the USA in Korea sharply aggravated international tension. The USA started a frantic arms drive and stepped up the production of atomic, thermonuclear, bacteriological and other types of weapons of mass annihilation. American military bases, spearheaded primarily against the USSR, China and the other Socialist countries, were hastily built at various points of the capitalist world. Military blocs were rapidly knocked together. The threat of a third world war with the use of mass destruction weapons increased considerably.